



BERKELEY FEDERATION of TEACHERS
LOCAL 1078 AFT, AFL-CIO



PRESS RELEASE

Tentative Agreement Announced Between BUSD and BFT

October 30, 2019 - Berkeley CA - The Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) and the Berkeley Federation of Teachers (BFT) are pleased to announce that we have reached a tentative agreement in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 contract negotiations subject to ratification by the BFT and approval by the BUSD Board of Education.

Key new provisions in the tentative agreement not found in the current agreement include the following for BFT bargaining unit members:

Compensation

In the area of compensation, the tentative agreement provides all BFT members an ongoing increase in salary of 2.5% retroactively effective July 1, 2019, and an ongoing increase of an additional 2.5% in salary effective July 1, 2020, for a total increase of 5% over two years.

In addition, the contract provides for an additional increase of 7%, effective July 1, 2020, subject to the passage of a special tax measure to address educator recruitment and retention, anticipated for the March 2020 ballot. With the passage of the tax measure in March, this 12% increase will make Berkeley salaries more competitive in Alameda County.

Starting in January 2020, substitute teachers will now receive a more competitive wage when they choose to work at our District.

Special Education

The tentative agreement includes new provisions for special education caseload and assessment limits starting in the 2020-2021 school year, as well as pay for temporary overages and voluntary additional assessment work. This will allow our Full Inclusion model to better serve our students with special needs.

Other provisions

The tentative agreement also includes new provisions in several other areas, including placement of Berkeley Independent Study teachers on the salary schedule starting January 2020, two additional steps on the psychologist salary schedule, and adult school teachers qualifying for health benefits their first year with the district. Language

was clarified around posting of vacant positions and the enrollment and start date of health benefits for new hires. We believe that these changes will lead to increased retention and recruitment of qualified teachers.

“We are very happy to have reached a tentative agreement with BUSD that will have a significant positive impact on our ability to keep great teachers in Berkeley and to have a stable and committed workforce in Berkeley schools,” said BFT President Matt Meyer. “We’re also pleased to have agreed on historic new supports for our Full Inclusion program, including caseload caps and limits on assessments. Our members’ unity and activism for the past year have led us to these substantial gains for educators and our students.”

"This tentative agreement demonstrates the District's commitment to address both compensation and funding gaps that have become realities for most California public school districts and teachers," said BUSD Superintendent Brent Stephens. "We're happy to have a tentative agreement in place that honors the hard work and passion for excellence our Berkeley teachers embody on a daily basis and allows us to return our full and collective focus back to the students we serve. "

“I’m happy to see our collective commitment to the Full Inclusion model and the value we place on supporting both the staff and the students who make up our diverse learning communities represented in this tentative agreement,” said Associate Superintendent Educational Services Bajé Thiara.

“The board is very appreciative of the time and hard work put in by both sides in the collective effort to reach a tentative agreement and especially grateful that the needs of our students were kept at the center of the discussion,” said Berkeley Unified School Board President Beatriz Leyva-Cutler.

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